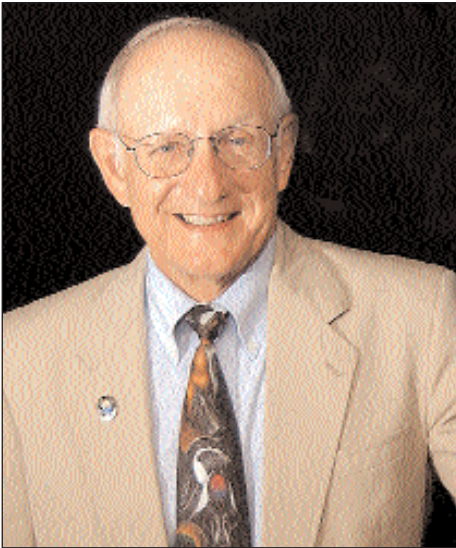




MATTERS OF OPINION



Dean Hildebrand
Director

Things are winding down for me as I get ready to leave my post as Director of the North Dakota Game and Fish Department. With that in mind, I must pass along a few Matters of Opinions expressing my appreciation to those who have made it possible for the Department to be all that it can be.

In this issue I must compliment the communications industry in North Dakota. When Governor John Hoeven appointed me as Game and Fish director, he gave me three major guidelines: To grow the resource, maintain balance, and to communicate.

It's the last guideline – communication and its importance to the Department – that I'd like to talk about. I place great emphasis on staying in touch with our constituents – landowners, hunters, anglers, watchable wildlife patrons and all who love the great outdoors. At Game and Fish, we have the Conservation and Communications Division. This division is not large, but performs one of our most important functions. These folks are responsible for getting the word out to those who have a desire to know. The tools we use include *North Dakota OUTDOORS*, weekly news releases, North Dakota Outdoors television program, website (www.discovernd.com/gnf), outreach staff, North Dakota Outdoors live radio program, educational programs, telephone staff, hunter and angler education programs, teacher education courses, the list goes on.

Relaying our message wouldn't be possible without the cooperation of the many members of the North Dakota Newspaper Association and North Dakota Broadcasters Association. As outgoing director, I personally want to express my deep appreciation to

the communication industry. When we send out our weekly or special news releases, the information is sent to 120 newspaper, TV and radio outlets. (That number, in truth, is even larger because one news organization will receive the information and then distribute it to sister publications and stations.)

I also thank the many reporters who gather information to report in their publications. These folks often call, come out to our building or visit our wardens and other field staff to do interviews to stay abreast of what is happening and what is proposed for the future. I can't remember a day when we didn't have some form of news coming from the Department. I am amazed at all the activities reported from the Game and Fish Department, with the help of the media.

The custom printers in the state must also get special mention because they allow us to do what we do. Without them, we could not do business. Granted, we are the customer, but without their many dedicated employees our quality of service would be lacking, at best. When you understand all of the licenses, guides, pamphlets, books, signs, posters, advertisements, magazines, etc., that we have printed – most of them with timely deadlines – it is an amazing tribute to the printing industry.

If there is anything I have learned during my years with the Department, it's that we get things done with people. I have been blessed to work with the best. These wonderful, capable, dedicated and competent people, both within and outside Game and Fish, have served North Dakota well beyond expectation.